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Chairman: Mr. Kmoníček ..... (Czech Republic)
Chairman of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions: Mr. Kuznetsov

Contents

Organization of work

Agenda item 119: Review of the efficiency of the administrative and financial functioning of the United Nations (*continued*)

United Nations system common services at Geneva

Agenda item 131: Financing of the International Criminal Tribunal for the Prosecution of Persons Responsible for Genocide and Other Serious Violations of International Humanitarian Law Committed in the Territory of Rwanda and Rwandan Citizens Responsible for Genocide and Other Such Violations Committed in the Territory of Neighbouring States between 1 January and 31 December 1994 (*continued*)

Agenda item 132: Financing of the International Tribunal for the Prosecution of Persons Responsible for Serious Violations of International Humanitarian Law Committed in the Territory of the Former Yugoslavia since 1991 (*continued*)

Agenda item 129: Joint Inspection Unit (*continued*)

Agenda item 120: Programme budget for the biennium 2002-2003 (*continued*)

Support costs related to extrabudgetary activities in organizations of the United Nations system

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The meeting was called to order at 10.10 a.m.

Organization of work (A/C.5/58/L.57/Rev.1)

1. **The Chairman** drew the Committee's attention to the revised programme of work of the Fifth Committee. The agenda of the first part of the resumed session no longer included the item on strengthening the security and safety of United Nations representatives, staff and premises because the report of the Secretary-General on the matter was not yet ready. The Committee could expect that report and the related report of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions to be issued well in advance of the second part of the resumed session.

2. **Ms. Stanley** (Ireland), speaking on behalf of the European Union, the acceding countries (Cyprus, the Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Malta, Poland, Slovakia and Slovenia), the associated countries (Bulgaria, Romania and Turkey), the stabilization and association process countries (Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, Serbia and Montenegro and the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia), and, in addition, Iceland and Liechtenstein, regretted that the Committee had not had sufficient time during the main part of the session to fully consider the proposals of the Joint Inspection Unit (JIU) and of Member States. The Committee should therefore not lose the current opportunity to make progress on the important issue of JIU and to agree on meaningful changes that would strengthen the Unit in its functioning as an effective system-wide external oversight body.

3. Implementation of the capital master plan was of crucial importance to the European Union, which hoped that the discussions at the current session would clarify available options and facilitate a decision on the next steps. The Union also looked forward to resuming the discussion of the item on the accounts of closed peacekeeping missions.

4. **Mr. Al-Ansari** (Qatar), speaking on behalf of the Group of 77 and China, said that the Group attached particular importance to the items on reform of the Joint Inspection Unit, human resources management, the capital master plan, support costs related to extrabudgetary activities, closed peacekeeping missions and various reports of the Office of Internal Oversight Services (OIOS). With regard to the status of preparedness of documentation (A/C.5/58/L.57/Rev.1), it noted with deep concern that some documents, in particular those under agenda item 121, were still being issued late. If not corrected, that recurring problem could adversely affect the smooth functioning of the Committee and result in a waste of time and effort. The Group regretted that the Committee would be unable to consider the important issue of administration of justice. It once again urged the Secretariat to strictly comply with the six-week and ten-week rules as well as with the provisions of relevant General Assembly resolutions and the rules of procedure of the Assembly, including those that prohibited the publication of any document on the United Nations web site before the corresponding hard copy had been simultaneously issued in all official languages.

5. **Mr. Tootoonchian** (Islamic Republic of Iran) wished the Bureau success in its work and trusted that it would adjust the Committee's programme of work if necessary.

6. **Ms. Santos-Neves** (Brazil), speaking on behalf of the Rio Group, said that the Group associated itself with the statement made by the representative of Qatar on behalf of the Group of 77 and China.

7. **The Chairman** said he took it that the Committee wished to adopt the programme of work, on the understanding that the Bureau would make the necessary adjustments, where appropriate, during the course of the session.

8. *It was so decided.*

Agenda item 119: Review of the efficiency of the administrative and financial functioning of the United Nations (*continued*)

United Nations system common services at Geneva (A/58/439)

9. **Mr. Juppin de Fondaumière** (Director of the Division of Administration at the United Nations Office at Geneva), speaking via videoconference from Geneva, introduced the report of the Secretary-General on United Nations common system services at Geneva (A/58/439). The report had been submitted in compliance with the General Assembly's request to the Secretary-General, in paragraph 8 of its resolution 56/279, to report to the Assembly at its fifty-eighth session on the implementation of that resolution.

10. The report summarized the efforts that had been made to enhance the existing common services structures initially reviewed by the Joint Inspection Unit in 2000. The approach of the participating organizations differed from that originally recommended by the Unit, which had been based on predetermined, fixed centres for pooled use by the organizations.

11. A mechanism consisting of the Management Ownership Committee, the Task Force on Common Services and various ad-hoc working groups had been in place for several years to investigate, promote and implement specific common services initiatives deemed to be in the interest of the participating organizations.

12. That pragmatic and flexible approach had given rise to a number of specific projects, most notably for electricity, travel and mail services. The special discount negotiated with the local electricity provider had saved participating organizations almost one million Swiss francs ($769,200) between 1 July 2002 and 31 December 2003.

13. Participating organizations in Geneva were committed to promoting further common services initiatives and had begun a review of the existing framework to make it more efficient. They were considering expanding the mandate of the Task Force and recognizing and strengthening the de facto role of the Joint Purchase Service in monitoring the working groups.

14. **Mr. Kuznetsov** (Chairman of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions) said that the Advisory Committee was recommending that the Committee should take note of the report. It took the view that future reports on common services at Geneva should be considered during the discussion of the proposed programme budget.

15. **Ms. Attwooll** (United States of America) said that while the report showed progress in the development of common services, it lacked perspective on how such services could help the United Nations Office at Geneva and its partner organizations in the future.

16. Although, according to the report, the participating organizations' approach to common services differed from the one that had been proposed by JIU several years previously, the same report nevertheless referred to the Plan of Action proposed by JIU. She wondered whether the Plan of Action would still be established, and if so, whether the deadline for establishment would still be 2010, as JIU had suggested.

17. Turning to specific projects, she noted that the implementation rate of the International Computing Centre was low and asked for a description of implementation problems and prospects for the future. She wondered what the results of the Management Committee review of the Joint Medical Service had been and sought details of the review of Joint Purchase Service activities carried out by the United Nations Office at Geneva.

18. **Mr. Drofenik** (Austria), speaking on behalf of the Presidency of the European Union, said that while the Union believed that improving inter-agency cooperation would improve efficiency, it would like more details on the issues raised in the report. It wondered, for example, whether the pragmatic approach described had been implemented at the expense of the Plan of Action and whether the original timetable for the Plan would be maintained. It also wished to know whether pursuing cost-effectiveness had affected levels of service and whether any customer-satisfaction research had been conducted.

19. **Mr. Juppin de Fondaumière** (Director of the Division of Administration at the United Nations Office at Geneva) said that the Geneva-based participating organizations proposed to implement the Plan of Action on or before its target date of 2010. They already had a yearly plan of action and were not awaiting 2010 to develop common services.

20. In 2002, the focus had been on travel services. A number of Geneva-based agencies had negotiated cheaper fares with major airlines. The United Nations Office at Geneva, the International Trade Centre, the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, the World Health Organization and the World Meteorological Organization had used a joint bidding process to select a single travel agent, and had established a single management mechanism for travel services. Information on the progress of the arrangements would be provided when available.

21. Other common services, including photocopying, cleaning and procurement of office furniture, were being considered. Working groups were exploring the

possibilities for streamlining and harmonizing the procurement of office supplies, examining mail handling, and seeking ways to improve banking services for participating organizations.

22. As each working group achieved its goal, it would either be disbanded or continue to operate and be monitored by the Joint Purchase Service. In order to make progress, participating organizations had decided to select priorities every year and to try to explore common services in as many fields as possible, rather than setting up working groups and inviting participants to join them, which was less flexible and more bureaucratic.

23. The recommendations of the Management Committee considering the activities of the Joint Medical Service were not yet available, but they would draw on the recommendations of the Joint Inspection Unit and the World Bank, which had been asked to provide advice and to propose a federated structure in which the United Nations Office at Geneva would become the lead agency for medical services for a large group of Geneva-based organizations while the World Health Organization became the lead agency for a smaller group of organizations. Providing medical services through a series of "hubs" would improve accountability.

24. With regard to the JIU recommendation for more collaboration with the International Computing Centre, the Centre cooperated with the Information and Communication Technology Network but was not obliged to implement its recommendations.

25. A customer satisfaction survey for common services had been launched and the Committee would be informed of its results. Feedback on the arrangements for travel services had been good and the International Labour Organization was interested in joining them.

Agenda item 131: Financing of the International Criminal Tribunal for the Prosecution of Persons Responsible for Genocide and Other Serious Violations of International Humanitarian Law Committed in the Territory of Rwanda and Rwandan Citizens Responsible for Genocide and Other Such Violations Committed in the Territory of Neighbouring States between 1 January and 31 December 1994 (*continued*)

Agenda item 132: Financing of the International Tribunal for the Prosecution of Persons Responsible for Serious Violations of International Humanitarian Law Committed in the Territory of the Former Yugoslavia since 1991 (*continued*)

26. **Mr. Nair** (Under-Secretary-General for Internal Oversight Services), introducing the report of OIOS on the review of the Office of the Prosecutor at the International Criminal Tribunals for Rwanda and for the former Yugoslavia (A/58/677) said that the report summarized the results of the OIOS management review of the Office of the Prosecutor (OTP), paying particular attention to the recruitment of the Chief of Prosecutions and Deputy Prosecutor.

27. At the time of the review, there had been only one Prosecutor for both Tribunals and OIOS had concluded that consideration should be given to appointing a Prosecutor specifically for the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda (ICTR). That post had been created under Security Council resolution 1503 (2003) and the current report had been amended to take account of that decision.

28. While providing additional support for the creation of a separate Prosecutor for ICTR, the report highlighted areas where the OTP of both Tribunals could benefit from sharing best practices. There was therefore a need for the two Prosecutors to keep in regular contact to build synergies, where appropriate. The posts of ICTR Deputy Prosecutor and Chief of Prosecutions had been filled in January and February 2003, respectively. The delay had been due mainly to the inappropriate recruitment procedures of both OTP and the Registry. OTP had construed the appointment of the Deputy Prosecutor as a political appointment not requiring a formal vacancy announcement, whereas the Registrar felt that he alone was responsible for selecting the candidate to be appointed.

29. The review by OIOS of arrangements for the completion strategy had revealed that there was insufficient information to confirm the Tribunals' contention to the Security Council that the OTP investigation and prosecution mandates would be completed by 2004 and 2008, respectively. OTP did not have a strategy document that formed part of a coordinated Tribunal-wide approach and identified the factors that impacted on the Tribunals' ability to achieve the completion dates.

30. OIOS had noted that the figures provided by OTP to the General Assembly in July 2003 for the number of investigations to be undertaken in both Tribunals were significantly lower than the corresponding estimates that had been given the previous year, a fact that had led OIOS to the conclusion that OTP needed to improve arrangements for planning and performance monitoring of investigations undertaken.

31. The information technology sections in the International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia (ICTY) and the ICTR Registry had been meant to serve all the organs of the Tribunals, including OTP. However, OTP had established its own information technology units comprising 22 staff in ICTY and 3 in ICTR. That duplication of functions had resulted in additional costs estimated at about $100,000 in 2003.

32. In its report, OIOS had made seven recommendations aimed at strengthening the ability of OTP and the Registry to fulfil the Tribunals' mandates in an effective, efficient and economic manner. A further recommendation, concerning an impact assessment of the closure of ICTR on the local economy, was aimed at minimizing any adverse consequences of the winding down of operations. He was pleased to note that management had begun taking action on the recommendations and OIOS would continue to monitor their implementation.

33. **Ms. Lock** (South Africa), speaking on behalf of the African Group on agenda items 131 and 132, in particular on the OIOS review of OTP, said that the Group supported the oversight functions performed by OIOS and the contribution it made to the efforts of the Secretary-General to ensure greater accountability and improved performance throughout the Organization.

34. The Group recalled that the General Assembly had called in 2002 for a management review of OTP because it was concerned that pivotal management positions at ICTR had been vacant for nearly two years. Member States were also concerned that the absence of senior staff would delay the development of a coherent investigation and prosecution policy, which was essential for the implementation of the completion strategy of ICTR. The Group therefore welcomed the efforts made by OTP to address those concerns.

35. OIOS had conducted its review prior to the appointment of a separate Prosecutor for ICTR, to the establishment of the independent Appeals Unit in Arusha and to the strengthening of the Tribunal's judicial capacity from four to nine ad litem judges. While recognizing that the report of the Secretary-General could not therefore fully reflect the comments of the new Prosecutor on the OIOS recommendations, as it did in the case of ICTY, the Group was encouraged by the assurances that the two Prosecutors were taking the necessary steps to implement the relevant recommendations.

36. OIOS had made eight recommendations focusing on the overall management of OTP, human resources management, the management of voluntary contributions and special operations funds, and information technology management. The General Assembly had pronounced on many of those aspects in considering and approving the budgets of the two Tribunals for 2004-2005 and the Group trusted that the Tribunals would take those matters into account in implementing the appropriate recommendations of OIOS.

37. The Group had repeatedly expressed its concern at the prevailing high vacancy rates at duty stations in Africa. In view of the delay that had occurred in recruitment to senior management positions in ICTR, the Secretariat and the Tribunal should act on the General Assembly's call for greater delegation of authority regarding recruitment and the extension of contracts of core staff for longer periods. Such a measure would ensure continuity in OTP until such time as the General Assembly was able to finalize its consideration of the financial requirements of the Investigative Division for 2005.

38. The African Group shared the view that enhanced cooperation between the organs of ICTR was required for the effective implementation of the Tribunal's completion strategy and welcomed the efforts made by ICTR to improve coordination of the activities of its three organs. It also welcomed the initiative of the

Prosecutor to improve the performance of the Offices, in particular through the use of information technology and changes in working methods, including the way in which translations were carried out. Changes made on the basis of the OIOS recommendation to ICTR to consider following the ICTY practice of using uncertified translations would contribute to the implementation of the Tribunal's completion strategy. While the Tribunals would benefit from a healthy interchange and closer collaboration, it was also important to recognize that the two Tribunals had different mandates, functioned in different environments and how unique requirements.

39. **Mr. Shalita** (Rwanda) said that his Government welcomed the decision of the Security Council to establish a separate post of Prosecutor for ICTR. Having the Prosecutor based thousands of miles away from Arusha and spending less than a tenth of her time there or in Kigali was in itself a recipe for inefficiency and ineffectiveness. That situation had been aggravated by the failure for two years to appoint a Deputy Prosecutor and a Chief of Prosecutions.

40. The completion strategy proposed by the Tribunal was both realistic and attainable and the completion of several high-profile cases in recent months gave reason for optimism. The burden of cases would be reduced through transfers to national jurisdictions. The transfer of cases to Rwanda, in particular, would contribute significantly to the reconciliation process by giving Rwandans an opportunity to witness the trials. Unfortunately, many of the survivors and victims of the genocide currently felt disconnected from the process. His delegation looked forward to the Secretary-General's proposals on the rules of procedure for transfers and to the preparations for a conference at which the international community would be invited to commit resources to support the exercise.

41. With regard to the concerns raised in paragraph 13 (c) of the report (A/58/677) about the death penalty, the Rwandan Government had formally communicated to ICTR its intention not to impose the death penalty in any of the cases transferred from the Tribunal. The question of seeking alternative national jurisdictions therefore should not arise.

42. While his Government appreciated the recommendation that the ICTR Registry should seek assistance from the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) in identifying a suitable United Nations agency, or other organization, to conduct an assessment of the impact of the closure of the Tribunal on the local economies of Arusha and Kigali, its priority remained the implementation of the completion strategy and transfer of cases to national courts. Any real or perceived economic impact on Kigali would be offset by what his Government expected to be a well funded and well organized transfer of cases to Rwandan courts.

43. The Rwandan Government supported the recommendation that there should be better communication and clearly defined roles between OTP and the Registry in recruitment and other aspects of their work. It also supported the recommendation that voluntary contributions earmarked for ICTR OTP should be used in accordance with donor agreements and found it rather odd that the Office of Programme Planning, Budget and Accounts (OPPBA) had not provided copies of those agreements to OTP and the Registry.

44. Caution should also be exercised when considering the practice of hiring uncertified translators for ICTR. It should be borne in mind that while people with those skills might be readily available and of an acceptable level of training and experience in a European city, the same could not be said for Arusha. Consideration should also be given to the effect such a recommendation might have on the credibility of the trial process and to whether it might not have the effect of slowing implementation of the completion strategy.

45. **Mr. Kozaki** (Japan) said that the report of OIOS (A/58/677) addressed issues of concern to his delegation. It pointed out, in particular, that there was insufficient information to confirm the completion strategies of the Tribunal and that at the time of the review no mechanism existed for promoting cooperation among the various organs of the Tribunals and for the planning and monitoring of the completion strategy. The OTP of each Tribunal should expeditiously implement the relevant recommendations.

46. Those responsible for the management and budgets of the Tribunals should bear in mind that, despite their own difficult fiscal situations, Member States were paying their assessed contributions to the Tribunals and could not be fully accountable to their taxpayers if both Tribunals did not make every effort to rationalize their budgets and improve their

management. The amount his Government could pay for assessments was not unlimited and any increases could lead to lesser amounts being available for voluntary contributions to international development and humanitarian organizations. Delays in rationalizing efforts and insufficient implementation of completion strategies affected other organizations. The Tribunals' Prosecutors should therefore keep that situation in mind and expedite the implementation of the recommendations contained in the report of OIOS.

47. **Mr. Repasch** (United States of America) said that the OIOS report (A/58/677) contained a great deal of useful information on issues of concern to his delegation, which was pleased to note that the Secretary-General had taken note of the findings and concurred with the recommendations of OIOS. He hoped that the recommendations would be expeditiously implemented.

48. With regard to recruitment and vacancy rates, recruitment to some high-level posts in the Tribunals, especially in ICTR, had been beset by failures of communication and misunderstandings, which had resulted in high vacancy rates. The recruitment problems described in the report were similar to those that occurred elsewhere in the Organization. For example, in a recent report on the recruitment of Professional staff to the Department of Peacekeeping Operations, OIOS had found that it took a year to recruit a Professional staff member. Given the recurrence of such problems, the Under-Secretary-General for Internal Oversight Services should explain what systemic problems were being encountered. The Office of Human Resources Management had informed the Committee that it was introducing a computerized system to expedite the recruitment process. Despite improvements in certain areas, the overall improvement had been somewhat disappointing.

49. The report contained no discussion of the issue that was the subject of recommendation 2. His delegation would welcome information on the justification for the recommendation and whether any action had been taken to implement it.

50. **Mr. Nair** (Under-Secretary-General for Internal Oversight Services), responding to a question raised by the representative of the United States of America, said that recruitment in the United Nations system was not an easy task largely because the requirements were very different from those in the private sector. Gender balance, equitable geographical distribution and ensuring wide and fair dissemination of vacancy announcements were all relevant issues. A vacancy announcement for an external candidate had to be available for 60 days. Moreover, there was a considerable delay between approval of the budgetary allocation for additional posts and the moment when the funds actually became available to allow the recruitment to take place. In his own Office, that delay was normally about three months. Another problem was the large number of applicants, since there was no adequate mechanism for preventing unsuitable or unqualified candidates from applying online through the new Galaxy system. The Office of Human Resources Management was currently addressing that problem.

51. Those were the systemic problems that slowed the recruitment process. In addition, there had been a serious misunderstanding as to who had the authority to recruit staff, a matter that had since been clarified. By addressing some of the systemic issues that had come to light over the previous year, he hoped that the unacceptably long time taken for recruitment could be reduced significantly. The previous norm of about 200 days could certainly be reduced to a maximum of 180 days.

52. On the question of devising a comprehensive completion strategy for ICTR that would minimize the impact of the closure of the Tribunal on the local economies of Arusha and Kigali, that issue had not been specifically articulated in the General Assembly resolution but had been raised by the auditors, who had found that the local economy in Rwanda depended very heavily on the existence of the Tribunal. OIOS had therefore felt that the issue should be highlighted. It was not a matter that the Tribunal itself could consider but it had to be addressed if the United Nations was to act in a responsible manner. He noted that the Secretary-General had accepted the recommendations and that OIOS would monitor their implementation and report back to the Committee if necessary.

53. **Mr. Sach** (Director of the Programme Planning and Budget Division), referring to the problem concerning the acceptance of voluntary contributions raised by the representative of Rwanda, who had suggested that the Office of Programme Planning, Budget and Accounts had not provided copies of donor agreements to OTP and the ICTR Registry, said that the comment had apparently been made in the context of

paragraph 30 of document A/58/677. That paragraph could be interpreted to mean that the Office of Programme Planning, Budget and Accounts had signed donor agreements which it had not shared with the Registry and OTP.

54. The contribution of $3 million referred to in the paragraph dated from the very early days of the Tribunal in 1995, when the Government of the Netherlands had made a contribution to the work of the Tribunal and an agreement had apparently been signed with the then Field Administration and Logistics Division of the Department of Peacekeeping Operations. That was an agreement to which the Office of Programme Planning, Budget and Accounts had not been party and of which that Office had not been aware until the Government concerned had enquired about the use of the funds. A report on the matter had been submitted in March 2000 by the Registrar of ICTR and it was his understanding that the Government of the Netherlands had accepted it. The Office of Programme Planning, Budget and Accounts would never withhold such an agreement from the department concerned, a practice that would be a breach of established procedures.

Agenda item 129: Joint Inspection Unit (*continued*) (A/58/343/Add.2)

55. **Mr. Gorita** (Chairman of the Joint Inspection Unit), introducing the report of the Joint Inspection Unit on the in-depth review of its statute and working methods (A/58/343/Add.2), said that the Joint Inspection Unit had come to the conclusion that, if it was to fulfil its mandate and meet the needs of the participating organizations more effectively, further improvements must be brought to its functioning and changes enacted, some of which might require amendments to its statute. It had submitted two previous reports on the subject (A/58/343 and A/58/343/Add.1), in October and December 2003, respectively. While it was still awaiting guidance from the General Assembly, over the previous three months it had pursued its internal process of reflection and reform with a view to making progress in those fields that did not require legislative approval or direction. A series of measures had been taken to improve the Unit's work, the choice of themes and the quality of its reports and notes. Those measures were described in the report before the Committee.

56. The Unit had finalized and adopted internal working procedures to complement its standards and guidelines. Those procedures were being supported by new processes and tools designed to ensure that JIU reports reflected the priorities of Member States and were relevant to major United Nations system initiatives and that the themes selected created synergies with other oversight bodies while avoiding duplication. In addition, under the new procedures, all reports were subject to peer review.

57. The Unit had proposed that its work should be guided by a strategic framework based on a regular and comprehensive assessment of risk in the participating organizations. Pilot risk assessment exercises had been conducted in four organizations in recent months and the findings were being used to design a common methodology to extend the exercise to other organizations.

58. Other measures taken included the enhancement of the Unit's web site to make it more informative and user-friendly, the development of an Intranet, which was now fully operational, and the completion of several databases.

59. The Committee had a good opportunity to make the additional changes necessary to strengthen the Unit and enable it to meet the expectations of Member States. He therefore trusted that it would take action on the matter.

60. **Ms. Stanley** (Ireland), speaking on behalf of the European Union, the acceding countries (Cyprus, the Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Malta, Poland, Slovakia and Slovenia), the associated countries (Bulgaria, Romania and Turkey), the stabilization and association process countries (Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, Serbia and Montenegro and the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia), and, in addition, Iceland, Liechtenstein and Norway, said that the Joint Inspection Unit had done an excellent job during the main part of the session in providing the Assembly with serious analysis of the areas of potential reform and a list of proposed actions. Eager to seize the opportunity for change, they were already in the process of implementing a number of reform measures that did not require legislative approval, including the adoption of internal working procedures; the development of new mechanisms to implement the strategic framework of 2003; the work on the establishment of a

methodology for spreading risk assessment exercises over the participating organizations; the development of a thorough validation process whereby proposed subjects or a report or note would be tested against set criteria, complemented by a peer review process and provisional measures relating to collective wisdom; a number of information technology projects; and measures to strengthen the role of the JIU Chairman.

61. While those measures would contribute to improving the efficacy of the Unit, they were not enough and the General Assembly should now pronounce itself on those issues that were highlighted in the Unit's preliminary and in-depth reviews. The Assembly should also shoulder its responsibility and initiate the necessary changes in the working methods of the Unit and some crucial amendments to its statute. The European Union was of the view that the Unit's main problems could be addressed by reforming the mode of selection of new inspectors, strengthening the Chairmanship and establishing collective responsibility for the work of the Unit.

62. **Mr. Kramer** (Canada), speaking also on behalf of Australia and New Zealand, recalled that the three delegations had expressed deep concern about the limited effectiveness and impact of the work of JIU. While they appreciated the Unit's efforts to make its work more relevant and useful to Member States and participating organizations, they also wished to make a number of proposals to that end.

63. First, the qualifications for inspectors should be stricter and candidates should have direct experience of audit, evaluation or inspection. Second, in order to make the selection process less politicized, candidates should be screened by a neutral body. Third, there should be greater collective responsibility under the leadership of the Chairman, as well as improved mechanisms for quality control. Fourth, the number of inspectors should be reduced, allowing for more technical support if needed.

64. In addition, careful consideration should be given to the best location for the Unit. Taking into account the prioritization of African issues across the United Nations system, it should perhaps be based in Addis Ababa or Nairobi, where it would be on the programmatic front line, rather than in Geneva. The General Assembly should request a study on the matter.

65. Noting that the Assembly had approved the budget for the Unit for only one year and that the Governing Body of the International Labour Organization (ILO) had decided to review its relationship with JIU, he said that those developments underscored the urgent need for reform. Major change was needed to position the Unit to contribute to the efficiency and effectiveness of the United Nations system.

66. **Mr. Iosifov** (Russian Federation) said that his delegation attached great importance to enhancing the work of JIU. Taking into account the Unit's unique system-wide mandate, every effort should be made to ensure that its potential was realized more fully. His delegation believed that that goal could be achieved without making amendments to the statute of JIU. Indeed, the revision of the statute could hamper the Unit's work since a new statute would have to be endorsed by every participating organization, which would be a complex and time-consuming process.

67. The most effective and rational means of enhancing the work of JIU would be to give fuller effect to its mandate, in particular articles 5.3, 6.1 and 6.2 of the statute; to improve its working methods and procedures; to update the themes and raise the quality of its reports; and to ensure that the effectiveness of its activities was adequately evaluated by Member States.

68. The measures described in the report before the Committee (A/58/343/Add.27) gave an idea of the possibilities for enhancing the Unit's work within the framework of the existing statute. The General Assembly should revert to the issue at a later date, when it could assess the effectiveness of the Unit's new working methods and consider what further reforms might be necessary.

69. **Mr. Terzi** (Turkey) said that the organizations of the United Nations system were carrying out a vast range of increasingly complex activities across the world. It was therefore crucial to have strong internal and external oversight, monitoring, auditing, inspection and investigation functions so as to ensure that organizations were fully accountable for the resources allocated to them. In recent years, however, the focus of oversight had shifted from securing compliance to adding value to organizations; auditing was expected not only to identify problems but also to provide potential solutions.

70. Accordingly, auditors and inspectors must be familiar with best practices in every area of management and have a sound understanding of

accounting and financial reporting. They must also maintain high standards of professional conduct and provide independent and objective analyses. To that end, a code of ethics should be adopted.

71. As an independent external oversight body with a system-wide mandate, JIU was able to take a broad and objective view of United Nations activities and to address problems from a unique perspective. Strengthening JIU would increase the value it added to participating organizations. He therefore welcomed the measures described in document A/58/343/Add.2, in particular, the steps taken to improve the quality and relevance of reports and the risk-based approach adopted to guide the Unit's work.

72. JIU should cooperate closely and exchange information with the Administration, the Board of Auditors and OIOS. For high-profile cases, joint teams should be formed. Given the Unit's limited human and financial resources, it was understandable that it should focus on strategic auditing and consulting. However, operational auditing was also important for evaluating the efficiency and effectiveness of operations and ensuring that programme objectives were achieved within desired cost parameters. There was a need for close coordination between internal and external oversight bodies to achieve an efficient division of labour in that area.

73. **Mr. Repasch** (United States of America) said that he was gratified to hear so many speakers take a position on the issue of JIU reform, which was of abiding interest to his delegation. Clearly, the time had come to take action to transform the Unit into an effective oversight body. The improvements made by the Unit itself, while welcome, were not sufficient to achieve that goal; that would require a sustained effort on the part of the Committee.

74. **Mr. Sun** Xudong (China) said that his delegation attached great importance to the work of JIU. As the only external oversight body of the United Nations system, it should work more actively to ensure that the resources provided by Member States were used efficiently. While the Unit had made valuable recommendations over the years, there remained room for improvement. Gradual reform was needed to ensure that its work was better planned and more effective. To that end, the Chairman should play a stronger coordinating role. The Unit's reports should be shorter and less academic and the topics chosen should better reflect the concerns of Member States.

75. His delegation trusted that the Unit would study Member States' recommendations for reform and implement them in order of priority. In the meantime, it should enhance its cooperation with OIOS and the Board of Auditors.

76. **Mr. Elji** (Syrian Arab Republic) said that, since JIU was the only external oversight body of the United Nations system, its reform was a priority. There was a need to strengthen the Unit, increase its capacity and refine its working methods. While the Chairman should be empowered to coordinate the work of the inspectors, it was for the General Assembly to select the inspectors and evaluate their qualifications. He welcomed the Unit's efforts to enhance its work, which had already led to a noticeable improvement in the quality of its reports. The reform of JIU should be the first step in enhancing oversight services in the United Nations and establishing effective accountability mechanisms.

77. **Mr. Chaudhry** (Pakistan) said that the report before the Committee demonstrated that, where there was sufficient political will, reform from within was possible. He welcomed the initiatives taken thus far, particularly the development of the strategic framework, the introduction of a peer review process and the setting of criteria for the selection of the subjects of reports, although the criteria themselves required further consideration. He was pleased that the efforts made by JIU had been acknowledged by previous speakers. While he agreed that the selection of inspectors should be less politicized and that there should be greater collective responsibility under the leadership of the Chairman, other ideas put forward, including the relocation of the Unit and the reduction of the number of inspectors, would require further reflection.

78. **Mr. Elnaggar** (Egypt) said that it was important to improve the working methods and monitoring functions of JIU. The reform must be aimed not only at achieving savings but also at making fuller use of the Unit and placing greater emphasis on performance.

79. **Mr. Kozaki** (Japan) said that reforms were needed in order to enhance the Unit's ability to produce high-quality and action-oriented reports.

Agenda item 120: Programme budget for the biennium 2002-2003 (*continued*)

Support costs related to extrabudgetary activities in organizations of the United Nations system (A/58/714)

80. **Mr. Gorita** (Chairman of the Joint Inspection Unit), introducing the note by the Joint Inspection Unit to clarify further some of the recommendations contained in its report on support costs related to extrabudgetary activities in organizations of the United Nations system (A/58/714), said that the report was the product of extensive consultations with concerned United Nations agencies, funds and programmes during the process of its preparation. The consultations had revealed a heightened interest in the topic, which was no doubt due to the increased levels of extrabudgetary resources in relation to the core resources available to the organizations concerned.

81. It was gratifying to note that the members of the Chief Executives Board had generally accepted the findings and recommendations of the report and had decided to use it as the basis for the Board's actions to harmonize policies with regard to support costs. It was also noteworthy that the Advisory Committee had endorsed all of the report's recommendations and had recommended that they be approved by the Assembly.

The meeting rose at 12.05 p.m.